

2008.1.1.1.1.40

Marie Harwood to Sam Steele

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Vaudreuil
May 14th / 89.

My own darling Boy,

Your dear letter of the 4th gave me a very pleasant surprise yesterday & I have perused it several times since, with the same feelings of delight. Your two last were so very short & did not half satisfy the longings of my heart! I trust when you have the privilage [sic] of admiring the results of my shopping when aired by Mrs. Mac that you will still believe it was left in skilful hands & does me honor! So my pet still sighs for my society – not accustomed to my absence yet? if you really are “a queer sort of fellow” the study of my darling will only prove the more interesting, not being of the kind usually known in a day. I do not dislike being considered matter-of-fact sometimes, but not being so to the extent imagined by some, do not relish the idea of being thought devoid of sentiment altogether. perhaps you too may find I inclinee too much that way, but it was for your sake

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as you well know. Few know me as I am, as I have always guarded my words & never let my actions betray my feelings. My heart has been well schooled & made to obey the dictates of the mind, consequently, am not thought the least romantic when in reality I am very much so! – I am not surprised Mrs. Mac started the subject you mention, though it is one I always endeavor to avoid. Not being thoroughly conversant with all the points one may bring up, I find it better let alone & if a person desires to argue, would send him to one of the priests of our church who knows what he talking of. The subject, though not entered into very fully by either of us,

would never have been the theme of any conversation had things not taken a serious turn, when it had to be well understood & settled once for all, I trust. I have no fear that my pet will change, as his word is sacred to him & I believe in his honor & his love. Lex knew me too well to give me his opinion when the conflict was going on in my heart, as to whether I loved you sufficiently

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well to unite my fate with yours – believing me self-willed, he told Mrs. Mac. not to say a word one way or the other. he once attempted the difference in our belief, but my calm, cool demeanor stopped him after very few words. With all that, my darling, I do not lack faith & will always do my utmost to help you be what I desire & pray for, a good man. Thank you, my pet for your confidence in me – my heart was indeed very sore when I read the passages in your letter which led me to imagine you might have found a reason to doubt me & the thought filled me with such regret that my brain was racked [sic] by what the future would be, without my pet to love me & protect me! – Your kind words have reassured & given me more love, if such a thing is possible & no doubt, the little clouds which now & then obscure the horizon of our love, only make it seem the brighter when they have disappeared & everything is clear once more. There is music in a word of command, when spoken by a voice well loved & I did not mind at all Mr. Cowie noting the change in my face, though I naturally blushed somewhat becomingly. I feel that my love will become even more intense after our lives are one & that only then, will I give entire sway to the feelings I treasure so now. I will not be disappointed in my darling I know, for he possesses sterling qualities which endear him to too many of his own sex, to be anything nice to a woman, particularly if she is his wife. if perchance, you should have faults, love will prove such a charm & blind me so that they will pass unnoticed & only serve as mediators to intercede for mine. Mr. Cowie flattered me very much & said “he did not know what they should do without me when I had left home” – he will persist in saying I am nice & dear to my own, while I really am not more so than all the others. I trust

Mrs. Henderson will like me, for your dear sake, my own pet. I do not fear meeting your brother as much as I generally succeeded in winning masculine hearts when they have past sixty. Ladies being so much

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more difficult to please, I dread the first meeting. There was but one occasion on which, I candidly must say, you gave me reason to believe you are fond of sweets, one Sunday afternoon, which you may remember. You are now aware who the culprit is that caused my ire to rise on the 19th, but, I have almost forgotten it. I have spoken to you, made my Confession & now feel happy at your forgiveness for my little fit of temper. Of course, the advice was well meant, I have known that all along, but was given in such a way that it jarred a sensitive chord & behold! The meek girl became a very angry woman. I think it wrong for a man to show his superiority & would not like you to be of that sort – a good mind & sound judgment needs no master, especially in trivial things; but love will cause a proud spirit to bend unknowingly & become a perfect slave, if the loved one always proves worthy of the deep devotion of a true woman's heart. Your sweet lines are very appropriate

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my own pet, & please me very much. I hope you may see very few frowns in the future my own old darling, though the last line of the first verse must be changed for then, as before, you must stoop to me, as I reach but to the level of your heart! – Your loving words charm me my darling & you never can imagine how sweet the feeling of being so much loved is! I shall forever be true, my darling, & have perfect faith in you. Your letters are beyond price to me & every word is burnt into my heart. I am glad you enjoyed the book & will send another soon – it amuses you & is a change from the dry reading you are so often busy with! – It is getting late, the day has been a very much occupied one as is usual in the country at such a season & I feel rather tired. I hope my pet is well & sometimes dreams of me – he is forever the one present when I am in dreamland I avow & I feel very blue

when daylight parts me from him. Sweetly I kiss “Good night” & pleasant dreams of your own true hearted little Girl.

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May 15th. My darling’s letter of the 7th I had the exquisite pleasure of reading today. I regret to hear you have had such miserable weather & trust it has changed long ago. I fear my closely written lines gave you far more than they did me & that is the reason I have taken pity on my own old pet, for I do not wish him to tire his eyes reading my poor effusions. It is to tease I offered to put off until next summer & at the same time intended you to know that if you found it more convenient to come later that it would not put me out, if it was your pleasure. So you wish me to be “Boss”? – well, with a few lessons from one who knows how to do it I may succeed in satisfying you. Mrs. Neale can flirt I have no doubt & has I hear a dangler at present in the person of an Inspector, Baker is, I believe his name – is she not silly? a woman of that sort pleases a man for the time being, as she amuses him, but can inspire no nice kind feeling, for she has

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not what all women should deem her due & strive most to win, a man’s respect – if that exists, love is sure to follow. When a married woman forgets her promises & seeks for admiration, though she may do it for innocent amusement only, one cannot but think less of her: it is too bad for him when he thinks the world & all of his wife. You must not feel any sadness or imagine you are not good enough for me my pet, for as I often told you, I am but a frail woman full of faults, doing her very best to become worthy of being the wife of such a one as my darling is. When a person does her utmost, one can but expect more. that will be the way with both, so that neither will be disappointed. A few lessons will soon make you proficient in the art of rocking & as there is not any great trouble about it, am sure you will do it very well. at least, well enough to suit me, as I fall asleep very quickly. I knew you felt sad when the word “frightened” was used, in connection with you, for

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I could plainly see it when you came in next day, but my pet must forgive his little girl, will he not? Mrs. Mac told me of her anxiety concerning the saddles & must be anxiously awaiting their arrival – she envied my rides last autumn, particularly when she knew I enjoyed them so much. You cannot imagine how happy I felt when on the pony's back & with you. The latter fact is, of course, why it pleased me so, for it would have been very different in any other company. Mrs. Mac does not for a second think she is timid nor does Lex for the matter of that – he found me too brave & thought you a trifle careless I believe, to allow me to whip the pony sometimes, for he cautioned me several times. I only laughed. It is not likely I shall ever forget the first lessons, either in riding or in loving, for the latter made the former too attractive ever to be forgotten. My cold has almost left me – the last remedies were too violent to be resisted, so it had to go. My pet's memory is short – do you not recall the description you gave of a certain haughty young lady you once met in the northwest & whom you said put you in mind of your sister? how cool she was for a while & how much she changed, being very affectionate afterwards? Well, of course I kept up the joke, knowing you meant poor little me. I regret “that you have forgotten the young lady, so cannot have been very badly smitten” – I see the tables have turned & my revenge is very sweet for you have been quite puzzled for some days. I trusted she was no rival, as you asked me “if I did not fear “such a rival” as she was sure to be? I certainly did not allude to myself when I spoke of warm, bright eyes, for mine are cold, grey ones – the eye, though the index of the soul, does not always possess the faculty of showing how warm the heart is! Mine are of that sort as a rule & were generally thought to prove what my character was, a very indifferent girl. those who knew me best were the only ones who could say, my heart was very affectionate. You are of the kind who admire a girl of spirit, that is the reason you won my love. but men usually like the clinging sort.

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You must forgive my teasing you a wee bit, it is a privilage [sic] given only to those I love & I certainly did not intend to vex you my own dearly beloved, when I spoke in such terms of the mystical young lady. I know the value of your dear love my darling boy, & feel that all you told me is true, that I am all the world to you, so you must not fancy it otherwise. You have not hurt my feelings in any way, my treasure, so pray dispel such a thought. it was all a joke commenced by yourself, but which your numerous duties may have caused you to forget for a time. my proofs of affection except in words, have so far been few, but the future will give many an opportunity of showing you what I will do for your dear sake. You know how dear you are to me, how deeply & truly I love you, having told you so often, that you must be tired of hearing it. still, I cannot resist bringing up the subject or saying a few words about my affection for my pet. The first proof I would give was my willingness to leave

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my home here to share yours & be blessed with your true love. Could I do more at the time? My brother is rapidly regaining strength – we will all be at home this summer for the last time for many years I suppose. [Unwin] will go down every morning & return in the evening – they wish to spend the last summer I am here with me. You cannot imagine how anxious they all are to meet “my major” & you will meet with a very warm welcome, rest assured. We are busy making our flower garden – it will be very nice – the “lilies of the valley” are just blooming & vegetation is much more advanced than it was at this time last year. Mrs. Mac wrote me a loving newsy letter which I will answer the first leisure moment I have at my disposal. They had quite a nice time during Mrs. Neale’s visit to Macleod, with lunches & etc. Well, my own treasure, dearly as I love you, we must part – the time is fast approaching when there will be no more partings

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for my love & I, though many must come, to enable me to have the happiness Heaven has in store for me. God bless you, my darling pet, &

forgive your little girl, if her sly teasing has really made you sad – it was very unintentional, believe me. do you hate me to call you “my own boy”? having passed the youthful gushing period, you may resent it, but would not say so, fearing to wound me. Well, my darling, good night. Heaven grant you happiness & love in the heartfelt prayer of one who loves you more than words can ever tell.

Your own warm-hearted
little Girl.

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